

**DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES  
DISTRICT I – SPECIAL MEETING**

March 19, 2001

7:00 p.m.

Atwater Community Center, 2755 E. 19<sup>th</sup>

**Members Present**

Patrice Dolenz  
David Franks  
Kenneth Hemmen  
Lori Lawrence\*  
Debby Moore  
Sharon Myers  
Steve Roberts\*  
Lois Tully-Gerber  
Willard Walker\*  
Council Member Rogers

**Members Absent**

Carrie Jones  
Edith Knox\*  
Rev. Lincoln Montgomery\*  
Marcia Traylor  
Billy Wilson  
Ken Woodard\*  
Dee Wright  
Carl Brewer  
\*Denotes District Advisory Board Alternates

**City Staff**

Cathy Holdeman, Administrative Services  
John Philbrick, Property Management  
Dana Brown, Neighborhood Services

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Call to Order**

**Council Member George Rogers** called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He explained that this special meeting of the District I Advisory Board was called to consider the request by the State of Kansas to site a Day Center Reporting facility at 1725 East Douglas. He acknowledged that State officials and representatives of Community Solutions, Incorporated (CSI) who were available to answer questions.

**Kent Sisson, Kansas Department of Corrections**, was introduced by Council Member Rogers and presented information about CSI. Sisson reported that CSI has a thirty (30) year history of administering community based correction centers and their home base is Hartford, Connecticut. The service provider is attempting to site three (3) day reporting centers with varying capacity in the following Kansas communities: Topeka with capacity for 40; Kansas City with capacity for 60; and, Wichita with capacity for 120. The Topeka center is scheduled to begin operating on April 1, 2001 but no dates have been finalized in Kansas City or Wichita. The Kansas Department of Corrections (DOC) is working with CSI and the City of Wichita to locate a site.

Sisson continue that placement at the site is available for post-release parolees currently supervised by DOC due to “trouble following the rules.” Each parolee would be screened before selected for placement. The parolees would be further supervised by the Department of

Corrections through a global position monitoring system. The federal legislature has provided funding for eighteen (18) months but the funding criteria restricts the facility from being operated by the State.

**Council Member Rogers** asked if sites have been identified in Topeka and Kansas City, and **Sisson** said they had. **Council Member Rogers** stated that because the site at 1725 E. Douglas was located close to East High School, Principal Katie Henry had been contacted and she responded that she has no objections to the site. However, Assistant Superintendent Ralph Turan did not support the site, said Council Member Rogers. He also noted that this was the fourth site being considered in Wichita.

**Sisson** explained that the first location was suggested by CSI in their request for proposal as identified through local realtors but the community opposed it. The second site was in an industrial area on East 21<sup>st</sup> Street where the landlord was open to leasing but again no community support existed. The third site was in the Twin Lakes area but the community opposed. **Franks** stated that community opposition is the determining factor.

**Council Member Rogers** explained that the criteria preference was a rural area if public transportation is available. He stated that a rural site would be best if reasonable transportation could be arranged to and from the community. It is important to seriously consider what alternatives could be arranged to avoid the "not in my back yard." Pertinent to consideration of day reporting center is the annual cost of \$30,000 to keep a prisoner incarcerated. Council Member Rogers stated that his position was to explore a rural site and possible transportation.

**Tully-Gerber** stated that additional criteria for the site should include (1) not being near a school, residential area, or adult entertainment; (2) at least twenty-three full-time staff to provide a fifteen hour day of supervision for the parolees; and, (3) working with the community to create partnerships for meeting the needs of the program.

**Council Member Rogers** asked **Cathy Holdeman, City Administrative Services Director**, how the City had worked with KDOC on the issue. **Holdeman** responded that Property Management for the City had worked with a broker to identify potential sites, and in the process, eliminated several. **Council Member Rogers** asked how the District Advisory Board members felt about the issue. **Franks** asked how many sites had been considered. **John Philbrick, Property Management Director**, stated that this site is the fourth one found but the site at East 21<sup>st</sup> Street was not seriously considered because it would require a great deal of construction that the federal funding restrictions could impact. Another site was extremely close to a rehabilitation facility, also not allowed by federal restriction.

**Ralph Turan, USD 259 Assistant Superintendent**, stated that he had real concerns due to the close proximity to East High School and Washington Elementary School. He added that the District Superintendent, Winston Brooks, had also expressed serious concerns with the site due to East High School students leaving at lunch, and the available time that students could have to associate with the parolees before and after school. **Council Member Rogers** asked if the proximity to the school was the main concern, and **Turan** stated yes. **Franks** asked what hours the students were at school, and **Turan** said it could be as early as 6:30 a.m. and as late as 9:30

p.m. with all of the school activities. In addition, Turan noted, the school is leased to other groups. **Council Member Rogers** noted that the day reporting centers don't appear to be a problem in every community; is the issue with one in Wichita due to the number of schools? **Turan** stated yes; the high school in an urban setting is particularly an issue.

A **member of the public** stated that he lived one block away from the Salvation Army facility and that he has had concerns associated with the facility being in a residential area. He stated that his background probably made him more understanding of the need for such facilities as his wife's occupation is a counselor and his family has been a foster family for Booth children.

**Council Member Rogers** asked Sisson to provide information on the background of the people who would be served in the day reporting center. **Sisson** stated that they had been prosecuted as convicted felons who are now paroled and living in the community. However, he explained, a day reporting center sited in Wichita must meet established criteria including zoning and housing conditions.

**Terri Saiya, representative for CSI**, stated that the agency wished to be a good neighbor. She explained that the people at the center would be reporting in and then leaving for a job. Furthermore, any of the people allowed outside the center will be under supervision, or monitored with the global satellite position device, she explained.

**Council Member Rogers** asked how many parolees were currently in Wichita/Sedgwick County and **Sisson** replied that approximately 1,400-1,500 parolees are supervised by the state in the metropolitan area.

**Council Member Rogers** stated that the available alternatives were difficult choices. He asked what the CSI philosophy was for working with the parolees. **Saiya** stated that their agency promoted accountability and responsibility while helping the parolees become capable, law-abiding citizens. Part of this was achieved through their requirement to perform 50 hours of community service. **Council Member Rogers** asked how their daily schedule was structured, and **Saiya** noted that they were supervised for fifteen (15) hours daily in conjunction with getting to and from a job site. In addition, they wear a tracking device as part of the monitoring system. **Council Member Rogers** asked what happens if they don't go to their job, or commit a violation. **Sisson** said that the state had a 12-hour window to take the parolee back into custody. **Moore** asked if the people are assigned to a center as an alternative to going back to prison. **Sisson** stated yes, that some technical violation has occurred for them to be eligible for the day reporting center, based on the nature of the violation.

**Rhonda Bocot, 401 S. Erie**, an East High School teacher and nearby resident of the considered site asked if the previous sites were primarily rejected due to a negative public response. **Council Member Rogers** responded that other issues were also associated such as the lack of handicap accommodations on the 21<sup>st</sup> & Oliver site, and elderly housing being located adjacent to the Twin Lakes site.

**Representative Judy Loganbill**, state representative for the district in which the considered site is located, stated that she had several concerns about this site including parking space, size of the

building, impact on transportation at rush hours, access to alcohol vendors, a primarily residential area, and the parolees will be in the area from 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. seven (7) days a week; and available bus services. She stated that any crimes that occur in the neighborhood would be blamed on the day reporting center parolees. She asked if the Finney Building had been considered—that it had two (2) empty floors and there were fewer transfers for use of the bus.

**Willard Walker, Board Member Alternate**, asked about the success and failure rates. **Sisson** stated that the state does not have that history. **Saiya** said that a history of success exists for their agency although they do not have the numbers/information with them to provide. They could ask their agency to send the information.

**Tully-Gerber** asked if public transit would be an issue? **Saiya** responded that it could be but they could adjust the program as needed for solutions. **Sisson** stated that a variety of resources would be used to make the program work.

**Council Member Rogers** asked for explanation of the involvement of DOC with CSI, other than contract letting. **Sisson** explained that DOC provides monitoring by two staff persons located at the facility. **Steve Roberts, Board Member Alternate**, asked about the accuracy of the global satellite position monitor; **Sisson** responded that accuracy is claimed for 9-15 meters, and they would hold the company to the claim as, supposedly, the system is leading technology. **Roberts** asked if the neighbors had been contacted about consideration of the site. **City staff** replied that contact was made through the contacts for identified neighborhood associations.

**Franks** asked about considering several sites at the same time to which **Philbrick** stated that the City had considered several and had eliminated the alternatives to this sites. **Holdeman** explained that much simultaneous consideration was conducted. **Philbrick** stated that the City was actually working with a broker as sites were identified. **Council Member Rogers** stated that the City didn't have to work with the State and CSI but were doing it to try to work together to make the best decision. **Council Member Rogers** reminded everyone that the parolees would be more closely monitored with the Center than the current supervision provides.

**Moore** asked about the Finney building, and **Philbrick** explained that use of the building requires a lease agreement and that bond financing does not allow any private use or create taxation.

**Tully-Gerber** asked how security would be ensured. **Saiya** stated that the people do come and go but the Breathalyzer is used regularly, a security system allows access and egress through manual operation within the building, and a staff person as a supervisor when leaving the building accompanies the parolees. **Tully-Gerber** noted that the parking lot would need to be well lighted. **Traylor** asked if the parolees at the facility would be more closely supervised than the work-release prisoners? **Sisson** said the difference was the tracking system. **Traylor** stated that she had employed work-release prisoners in the past and had no problems. **Sisson** said that he couldn't say that all individual would be successful, however, he reported that none of the people wearing the tracking system device have committed serious crimes. **Franks** said that a perception is the same as reality—that in the past a perception existed that the area was gang-

infiltrated even when it wasn't. But because the perception existed, concerns were increased in the elderly population and electronic businesses in the area.

**James Thompson, 623 N. Volutia**, asked if the parolees would be from out of state to which **Sisson** stated that they must be Kansas-based offenders living in this community but that means they were sentenced in Kansas and not necessarily a long-time resident of the state.

**Tom Fox, 250 S. Eve and a member of the East Front Neighborhood Association**, stated that the facility would not help their neighborhood. **Turan** reported that Winston Brooks stated that if he needed to involve the Board of Education in the issue that he would. **Council Member Rogers** noted that City Property Management staff has considered a number of sites and are finding it difficult to identify an acceptable site. He reminded everyone, however, that the State could place the facility in any site that is zoned appropriately, whether there is public opposition or not. He expressed the need to rely on the judgment of people who professionally operate this service.

**Moore** asked if the Food Bank had been notified. **Philbrick** replied that the realtor had made some contacts with businesses in the area but he wasn't sure if the Food Bank was one of them.

**Tully-Gerber** asked if the Board was ready to make a recommendation. **Council Member Rogers** replied that he assumed the Council would consider the issue but was not certain due to the "not in my back yard" nature. He noted that the information considered at this meeting might not be adequate enough for a thorough consideration. **Tully-Gerber** responded that a similar public process was utilized in Kansas City and Topeka. **Council Member Rogers** noted, however, that neither city has a formal public involvement process.

**Hemmen (Taylor)** moved to recommend the site. The vote was 3:3; **Council Member Rogers** stated that the motion died for a lack of majority. He then thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

**Action: No recommendation to neither approve nor disapprove the site was determined.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Brown, Neighborhood Assistant

**Guests**

Kent Sisson  
Representative Judith Loganbill  
Rhonda Bocock  
James Thompson  
Tom & Carol Fox  
Alan Collson  
Ralph Turan  
Christy Gates  
Terri Saiya  
Chris Saiya  
B. Franklin

Kansas Department of Corrections  
215 S. Erie, 67211  
401 S. Erie, 67211  
623 N. Volutia, 67214  
250 S. Erie, 67211  
258 Chautauqua, 67211  
Wichita Public Schools  
210 N. St. Francis  
Community Solutions, Inc. Topeka, 66611  
Topeka, 66611  
Community Solutions, Inc. 67207